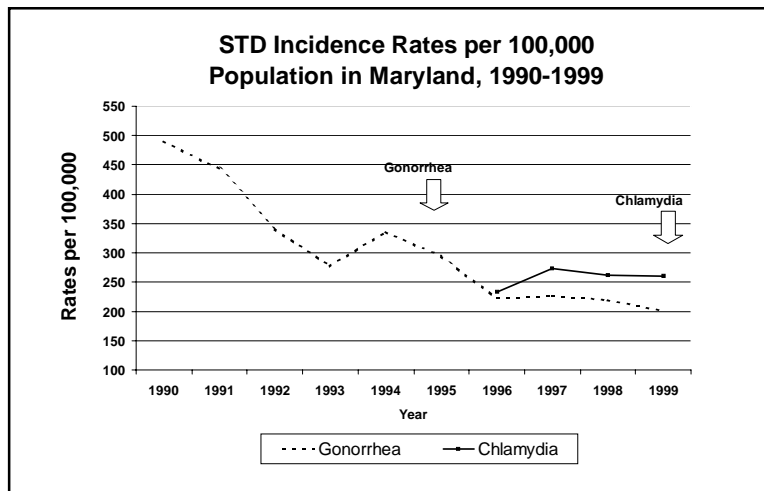


# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

## The Issue

*The impact of sexually transmitted diseases varies around the State and among different population groups - with women, adolescents, and African-Americans being disproportionately affected. Control of these diseases, which are among the most widespread, least detected, and costly of the infectious diseases, is essential for Maryland's public health.*

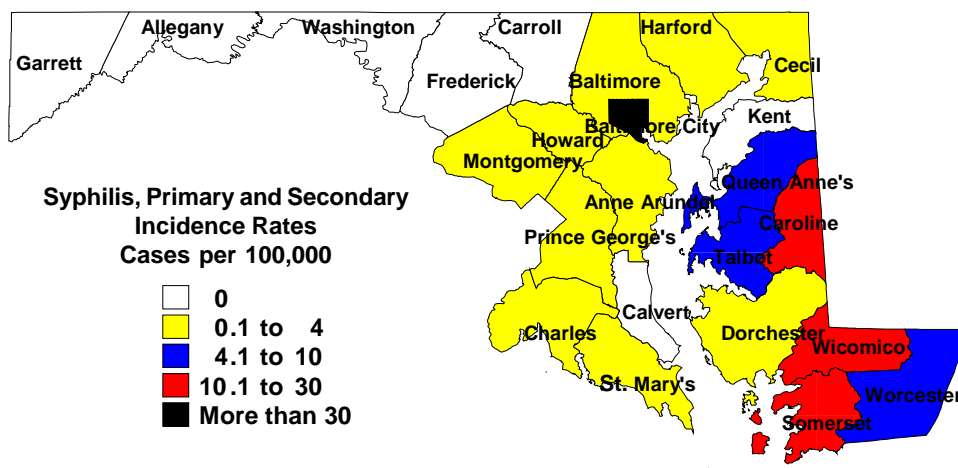


Source: Maryland DHMH Center for Community Epidemiology, 2000

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are among the most widespread, least detected, and costly infectious diseases reported throughout the world today. STDs (syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, Hepatitis B and Human Papilloma Virus, in particular) have long been a significant public health problem. STDs can cause many harmful, often irreversible, and costly clinical complications, including reproductive health problems, fetal and perinatal health problems, and cancer.

Maryland experienced downward trends in the case numbers and rates of STDs in the early 1990s. However, in 1997, Maryland's rate of infectious syphilis was the highest in the nation. Additionally, Maryland's reported rate of gonorrhea infections was almost double the comparable national rate for 1998. While the impact of STDs varies across the State and among different population groups (with women, adolescents, African-Americans and other minorities disproportionately affected), STDs are a continuing public health concern to all residents of Maryland.

## Primary and Secondary Syphilis in Maryland, 1999



Source: Epidemiology and Disease Control Program, DHMH, 1999

## Topics, by jurisdiction, included in the Health Improvement Plan

**Statewide** - *Preventing Sexually Transmitted Diseases*

**Caroline County** - *Control of Sexually Transmitted Diseases Among the Adolescent Population of Caroline County*

**Kent County** - *Reducing Sexually Transmitted Disease Rates in Kent County*

## Priority focus in other jurisdictions

STDs is included as a priority area for FY2000 in:

Allegany County • Anne Arundel County • Caroline County • Cecil County  
Dorchester County • Harford County • Kent County • Prince George's County  
Worcester County • Baltimore City

## Highlights of HIP strategies recommended to decrease STDs

(for in-depth details, see the complete text of each state and county module)

- Reduce the rates of gonorrhea and syphilis. (**State**)
- Reduce the rates of chlamydia. (**State, Caroline and Kent counties**)
- Promote rapid identification and follow-up of persons with STDs to assure adequate treatment, education, and partner counseling. (**State**)
- Build the public health infrastructure to eliminate STD in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations. (**State**)
- Educate nurses and private physicians about the importance of case reporting, treatment, and contact tracing. (**Caroline County**)
- Provide informational pamphlets in the health suites of county middle schools and high schools. (**Kent County**).

## Statewide Partners

AIDS Administration, DHMH • Center for Maternal and Child Health, DHMH • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention • Emergency Nurses Association, Maryland Chapter • Epidemiology and Disease Control Program, DHMH • Johns Hopkins University • Maryland Addiction and Substance Abuse Clinics • Maryland Association of Correctional Administrators • Maryland Association of County Health Officers • Maryland Association for Practitioners in Infection Control and Epidemiology • Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians • Maryland Coalition for Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies • Maryland Commission on Infant Mortality Prevention • Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) • Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections • Maryland Family Planning Clinics • Maryland Gynecological and Obstetric Society • Maryland HMOs • Maryland Hospital Association • Maryland Local Health Departments • Maryland Medical Assistance Program, DHMH • Maryland Mental Health Programs • Maryland Perinatal Association • Maryland Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Manufacturers • Maryland State Department of Education • Region III Centers for Education and Training • University of Maryland School of Medicine